FINAL ISSUE!

Vanity Angel

VENUS COMICS

6 FEB. 1995

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MANGA

ADULTS ONLY

BY KAORI ASANO

ANTARCTIC BLAST
FEBRUARY 1995

... the bells toll

Ah, February. By now, Christmas presents are pretty much worn in, everyone's finally gotten used to writing 1995 instead of 1994, and most people have had time to let their New Year's resolutions slide comfortably back into the realm of pure memory. It's a happy month, what with Valentine's Day, and paychecks being a little closer together for those of us who get paid twice a month. It's also a big month for all of us here at Antarctic Press.

This month we have our second- and fourth-highest-selling books ever, WARRIOR NUN AREALA #2 and STAINLESS STEEL ARMADILLO #1. Between those two hits and generally good sales on most of our other books, February stands out as our second-best month ever in terms of total circulation. Response to date on WARRIOR NUN AREALA #1 has been nothing short of phenomenal, and we're expecting the second issue to impress people just as much as the first, if not more.

Another reason for us to be happy is that two of AP's valued employees are getting married this month. I'm happy because (a) I'm one of those two employees, and (b) Katie and I will therefore get lots of obligatory presents from my well-heeled subordinates. Everyone else is happy because there's going to be an open bar at the reception.

All of which puts us in a very forward-looking mood. Sure, it's the post-Christmas sales doldrums, and not all of our books are huge hits, but 1995 is shaping up to be a landmark year for Antarctic. We're going to be putting a lot of time and energy into new promotional avenues, more high-profile projects, and ever-greater quality for our line overall. That's not just puffery or hype — we've grown enormously in the last few years, and this year, our tenth anniversary year, is the one we're planning to turn into a breakthrough.

Which is another reason why February is special. Nine years ago, in February, we came out with our second comic book ever, MANGAZINE #2. It was our second issue, produced in the second month of our second year. It had taken us six months to put together after a number of major mistakes in doing the first issue, but once it was out, we were truly a company — an *ongoing concern*, as they say — not just a one-shot flash in the pan. This month we publish WARRIOR NUN #2, whose terrific sales tell us that the first WN wasn't just a fluke or flash in the pan. We've increased our circulation by over 40 times between those two #2 issues. Instead of six months between comics, we now produce four to six comics a *week* on average. If we can make that kind of progress in a decade, starting from a base readership of under 2,000, I feel pretty good about our prospects for the next ten years, starting from a base readership of over 80,000.

I hope you feel good about February too. After all, I couldn't be happy about it if it weren't for you readers' enthusiasm for our books.

I'd invite you all to the wedding, but then the bar bill would *really* kill us.

Herb Mallette
Editor in Chief

Pat's Comic Guide

I just finished reading Evan Dorkin's editorial from the Comics Buyer's Guide #1104. Apparently it ran in a couple of publications because this is the second time I've seen it; but, typical of Evan's comics work, it was worth another look —if only because it hit so close to home. For those of you who may have missed it, Evan says comics don't receive respect as a medium because publishers are fixated on the superhero genre. In turn, such superficial comics are quickly outgrown and our readers move on to more graphically vicarious entertainment — such as movies or computer games. All this, of course, is responsible for the wretched state of the comic market. This is just a loose summary, mind you. Read the original editorial for all the biting wit, angry finger-pointing and shocking revelations of sanctimonious behavior from Marvel, DC, Image and Malibu.

I couldn't agree more with what Evan says. In fact, last November I made many of the same points in my column "A Question of Diversity." However, as much as I agree with Evan's assessment of how we got into this situation, I don't share his pessimistic view of the future. I visit my local comic store twice a week to see what new books come in and rarely leave empty-handed. There's a growing amount of talent taking seed outside the traditional superhero genre. So much so that I think the comic book as an artistic medium has rarely, if ever, enjoyed such variety or vision. So, this month I'm going to dedicate some space to a few exceptional comics that you may not have heard about.

Evan Dorkin's **Milk & Cheese** (Slave Labor) is great, but so is his work in **Dork** (Slave Labor) and **Instant Piano** (Dark Horse). Obscure Ayn Rand jokes, fanboys and pathos. It's scary how dead on he is describing our generation. Good stuff! **Tyrant** (SpiderBaby Grafix), is Steve Bissette's ambitious account of the birth and death of a T-Rex. Well written, painfully accurate and beautifully rendered. Worth any price. **Dr. Radium, Man of Science!** (Slave Labor) by Scott Saavedra is most amusing. Try **Java Town** (Slave Labor) too! Guaranteed to soften your brain! Tommy Yune's **Buster the Amazing Bear** (Ursus Studios) is as high-tech a comic as you'll find. Tommy pushes his Macintosh to the limits to shade this! B&W never looked so good. **Flaming Carrot Comics** remains a pleasing enigma. Bob Burden once told a friend of mine he liked to lick those tequila suckers (the ones with the worm in them!) and stick them to his head to attract women. Irresistible! **Cud** (Fantagraphics —moving to Dark Horse), and more recently **Eno & Plum** in **DHP** (Dark Horse) are both hilarious. Terry Laban has a brilliant grasp of art, irony and people. No one can spin a yarn about slackers like Terry. Well, except maybe Peter Bagge with his book **Hate!** (Fantagraphics) or Jeff Levine's **No Hope** (Slave Labor). If you like those three you'll probably enjoy Ed Brubaker's **Lowlife** (Aeon). It reads like a biography. I'm afraid to ask how much is true and how much is made up. I can't say enough good things about **Wandering Star** (Pen & Ink Comics) by Teri S. Wood. I met her and Michael Cohen of **Strange Attractors** (RetroGrafix) during a signing. Both books have entirely engrossing stories and a certain charm long lost in the production-line pap of mainstream books. Find them and buy them.

This is by no means a complete list, nor is it in any particular order. Rest assured, I've only scratched the surface of the quality books that are out there. If you can get past the hypocrisy, the market manipulation, the hype and the whining you'll see we have a lot to offer our audience. And, with this much talent in comics, I can't possibly see how we'll fail to redefine the field and win a secure future for the medium.

-PAT
Creative Director

CHECK OUT ANTARCTIC PRESS' other releases*
*subject to change

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- ☐ Absolute Zero #1
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- ☐ Warrior Nun Areala #2
- ☐ Albedo v3 #3
- ☐ Sentai #6
- ☐ Dodekain #4
- ☐ SB NHS #4
- ☐ Stainless Steel Armadillo #1
- ☐ Silbuster #9
- ☐ Furrlough #26
- ☐ Nick Ryan: The Skull #3
- ☐ Battle Binder Plus #4 (Venus)
- ☐ Vanity Angel #6 (Venus)
- ☐ Emblem #8 (Venus)
- ☐ Bondage Fairies #5 (Venus, 2nd)
- ☐ Furrlough #2 (relist)
- ☐ Mangazine #6 (relist)

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Vanity Angel 6

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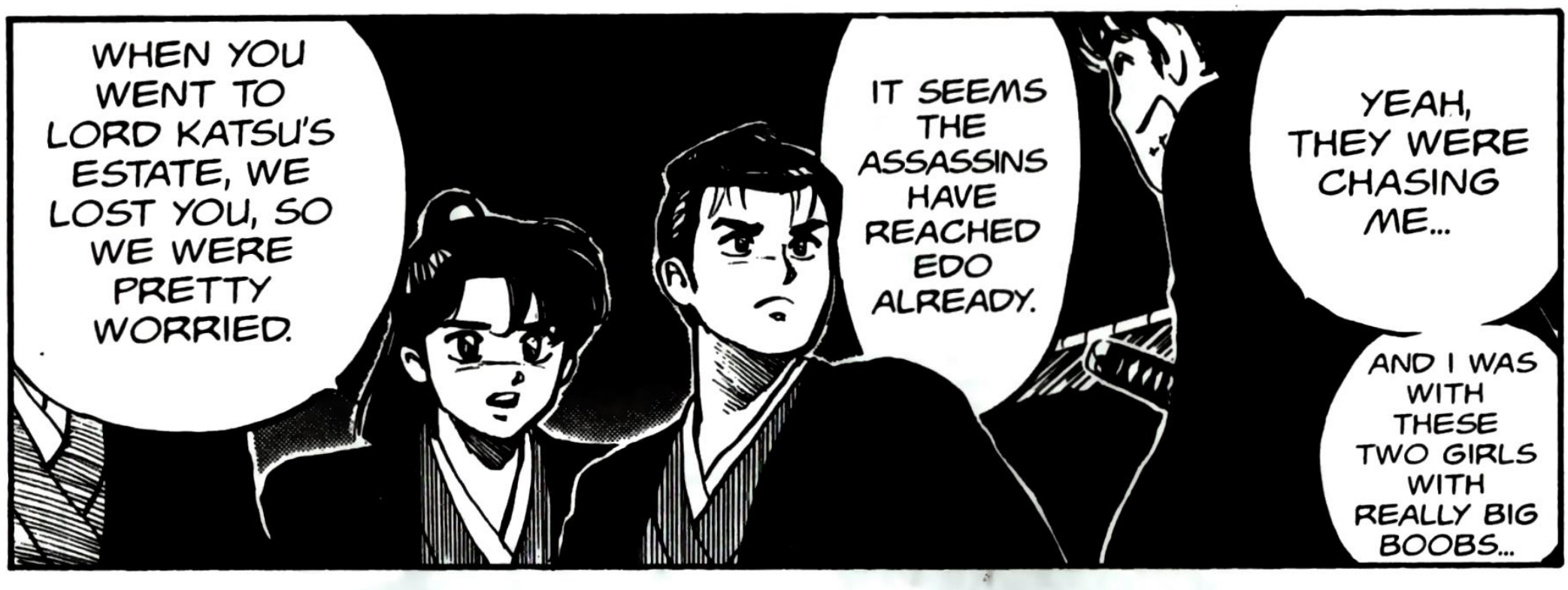
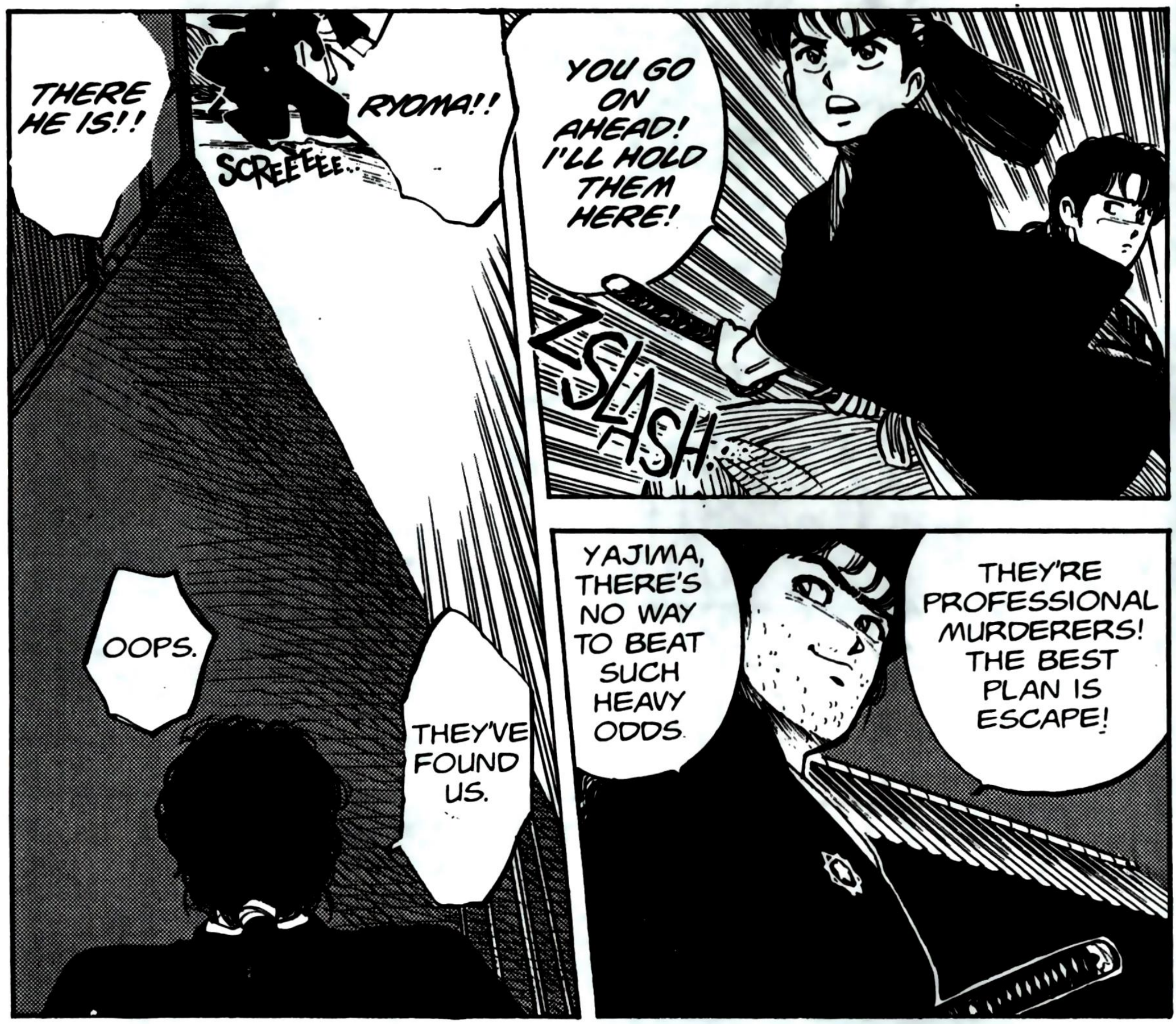
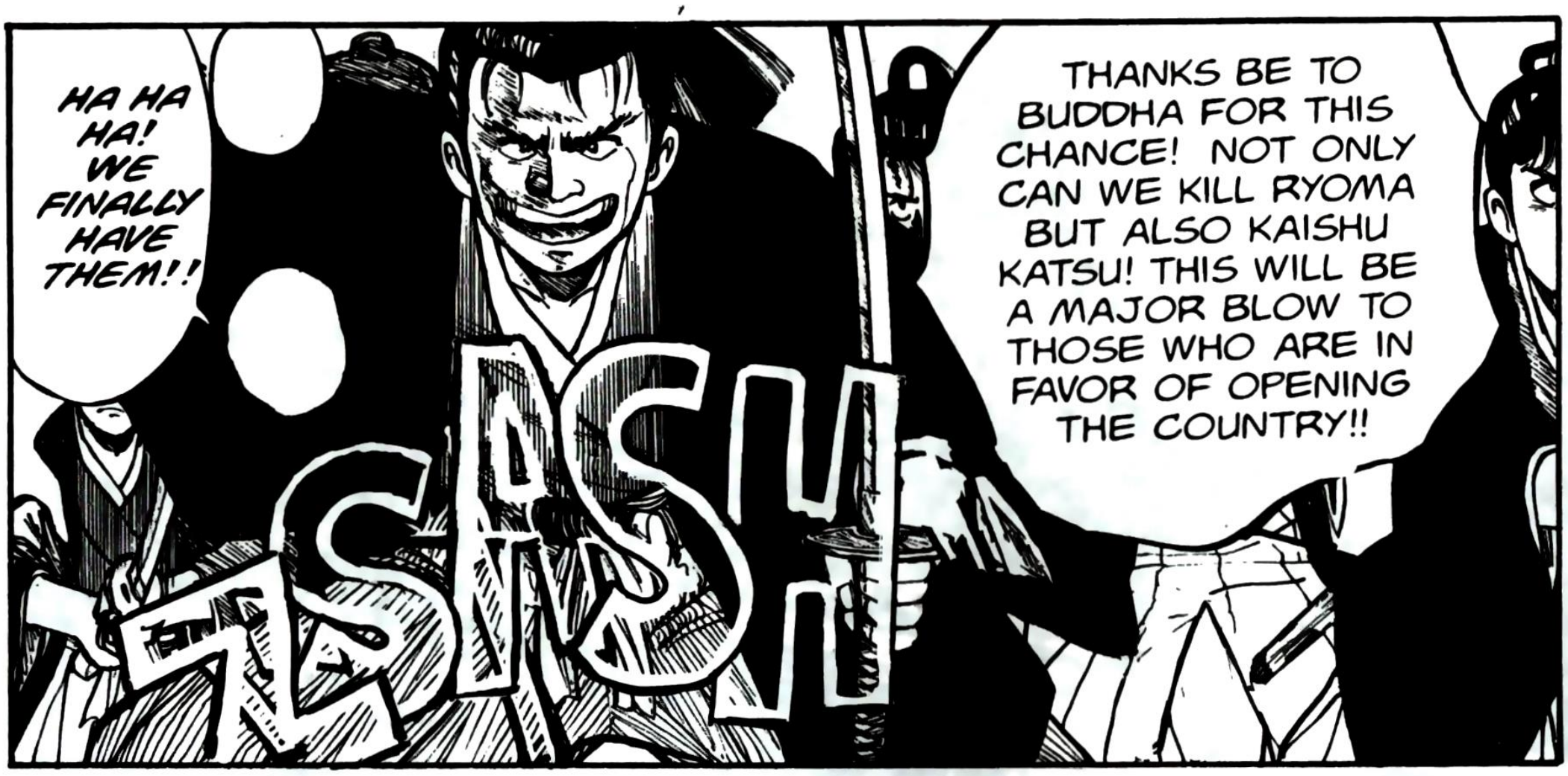
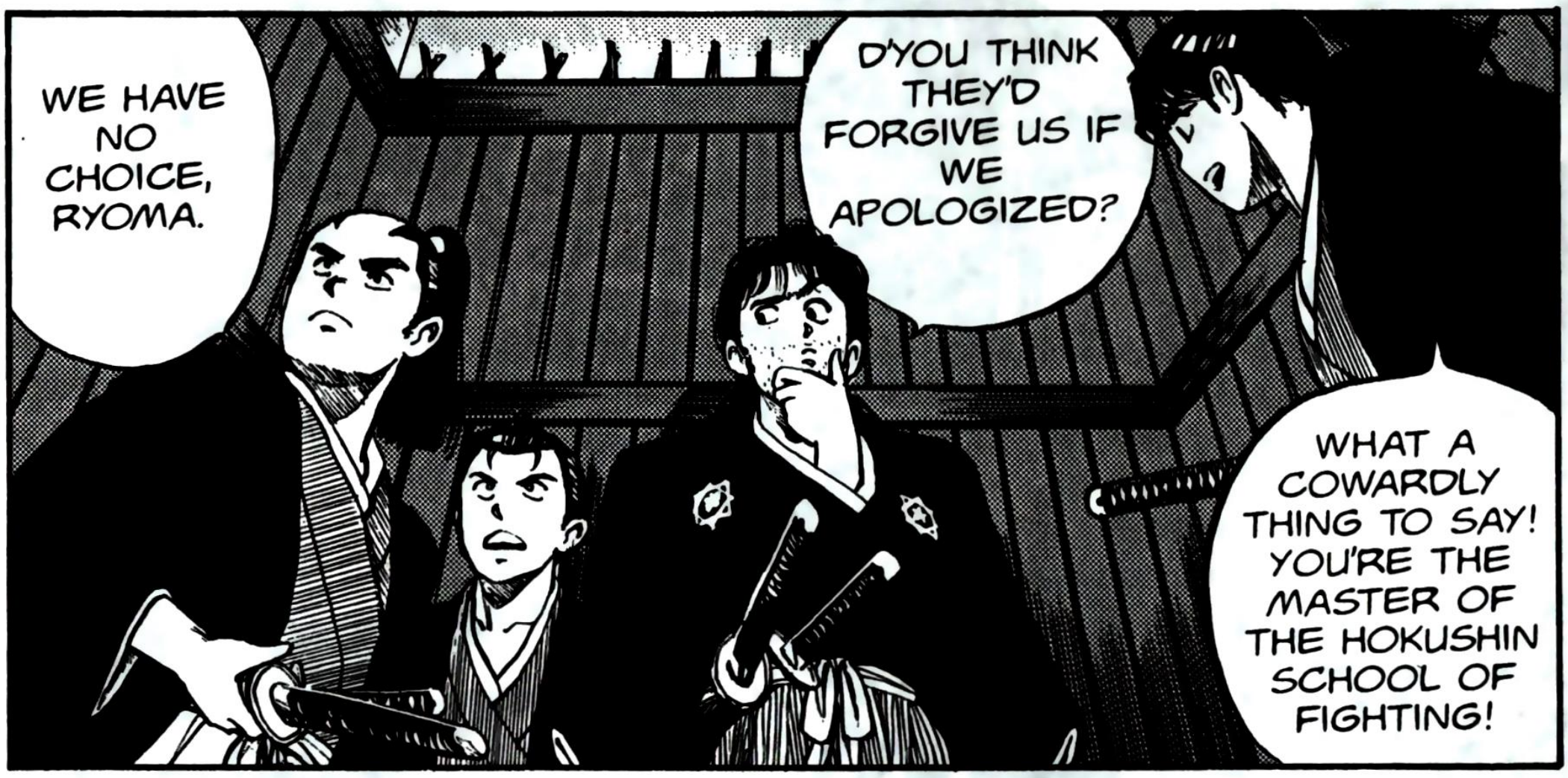

WHEN YOU WENT TO LORD KATSU'S ESTATE, WE LOST YOU, SO WE WERE PRETTY WORRIED.
IT SEEMS THE ASSASSINS HAVE REACHED EDO ALREADY.
YEAH, THEY WERE CHASING ME...
AND I WAS WITH THESE TWO GIRLS WITH REALLY BIG BOOBS...

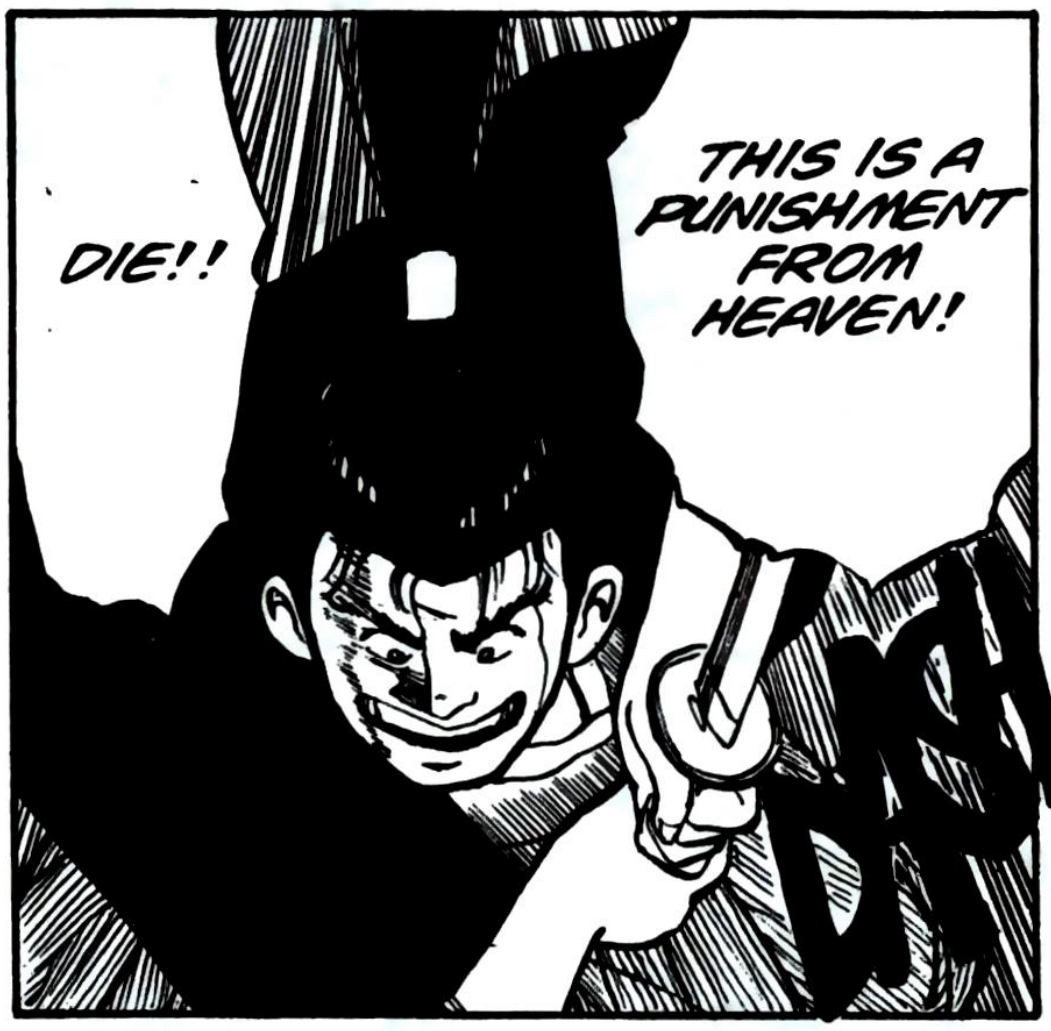
THE ASSASSINS WERE CHASING YOU?! WHERE ARE THEY NOW?!
MELON STARTED TO...
UUUMMM...I MEAN, THEY WERE PARALYZED WITH FEAR BECAUSE OF THAT LIGHT!


THERE HE IS!!
RYOMA!!
SCREEEEEE...
YOU GO ON AHEAD! I'LL HOLD THEM HERE!
ZSLASH.
OOPS.
THEY'VE FOUND US.
YAJIMA, THERE'S NO WAY TO BEAT SUCH HEAVY ODDS.
THEY'RE PROFESSIONAL MURDERERS! THE BEST PLAN IS ESCAPE!

RYOMA! STOP!
VWOSH
ZREEAM...
ME~LON!
KRAK
EEEK!
WHOOSH
AEEEEEK
HELP ME!
OOOM
MOMMY!
Huf!

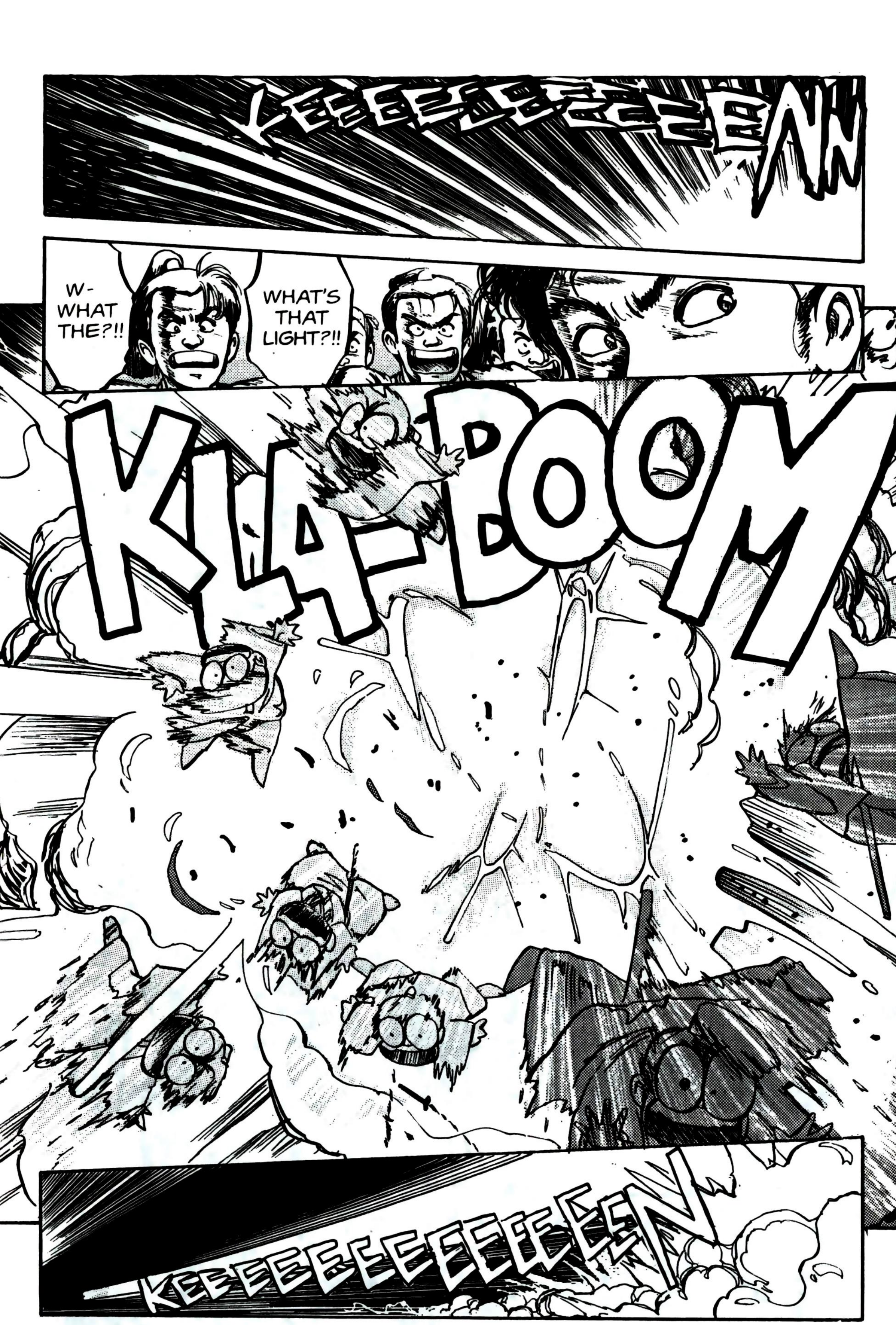

HA HA HA! WE FINALLY HAVE THEM!!
THANKS BE TO BUDDHA FOR THIS CHANCE! NOT ONLY CAN WE KILL RYOMA BUT ALSO KAISHU KATSU! THIS WILL BE A MAJOR BLOW TO THOSE WHO ARE IN FAVOR OF OPENING THE COUNTRY!!
FLASH


WE HAVE NO CHOICE, RYOMA.
D'YOU THINK THEY'D FORGIVE US IF WE APOLOGIZED?
WHAT A COWARDLY THING TO SAY! YOU'RE THE MASTER OF THE HOKUSHIN SCHOOL OF FIGHTING!


DIE!!
THIS IS A PUNISHMENT FROM HEAVEN!
DASH

OH!
FLASH

?
?


KEEEEEEEEEEEEEN
W-WHAT THE?!!
WHAT'S THAT LIGHT?!!
KA-BOOM
KEEEEEEEEEEEEEN

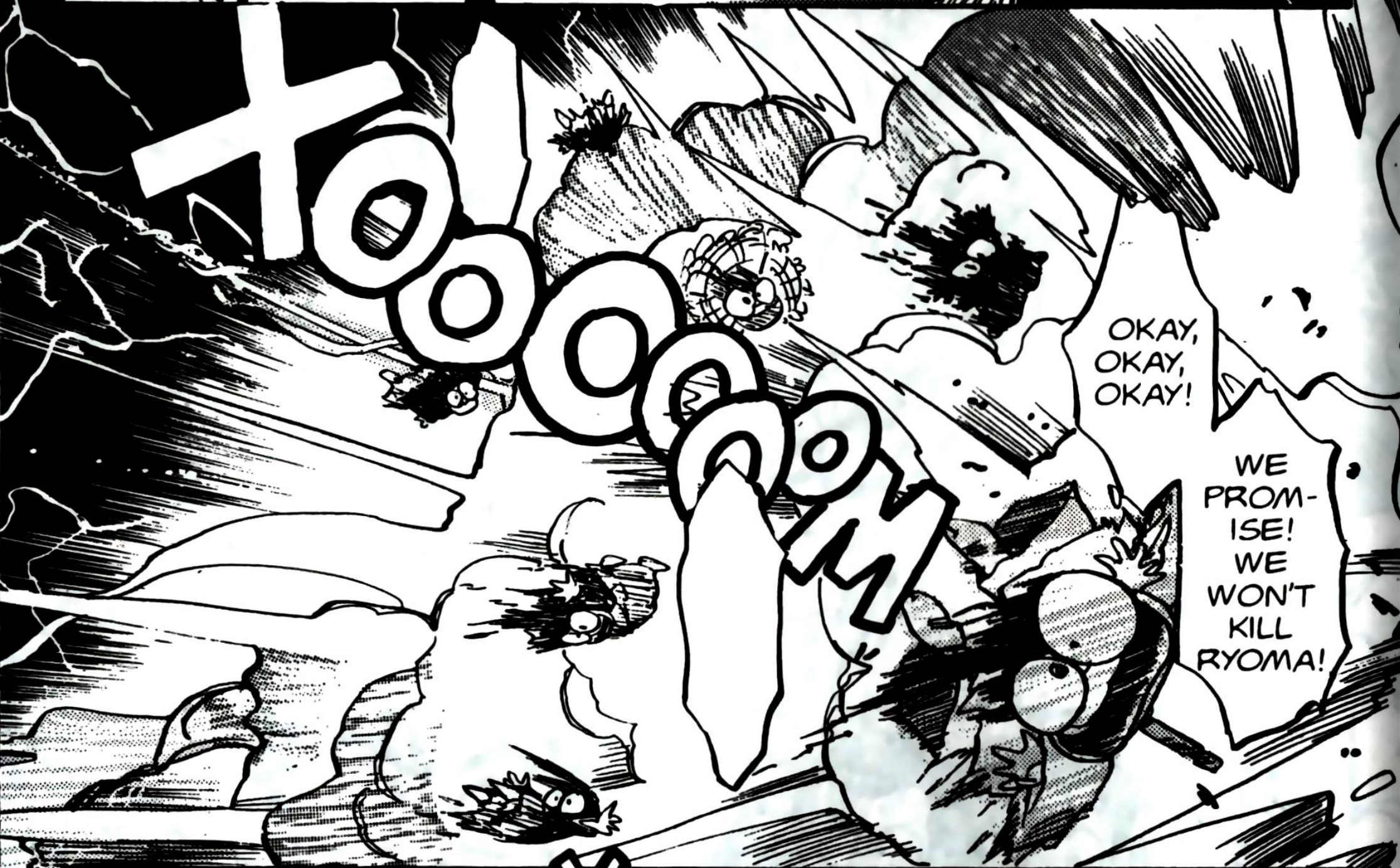
OH
BOOOOOOM
IT
IT'S BACK!!
EEEEEK
NO!!
RUN!

ZAP
No!
Huh?
Oh!
NNN-P
THBOOM
KABOOM
KABLAAM
W-WHAT IS THAT?
THEY REALLY OUGHTA STOP THAT...
NON, MELON...
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!
A FIGHT?
WHERE'S THE FIRE?!
NO! MY HOUSE IS RUINED!

.....

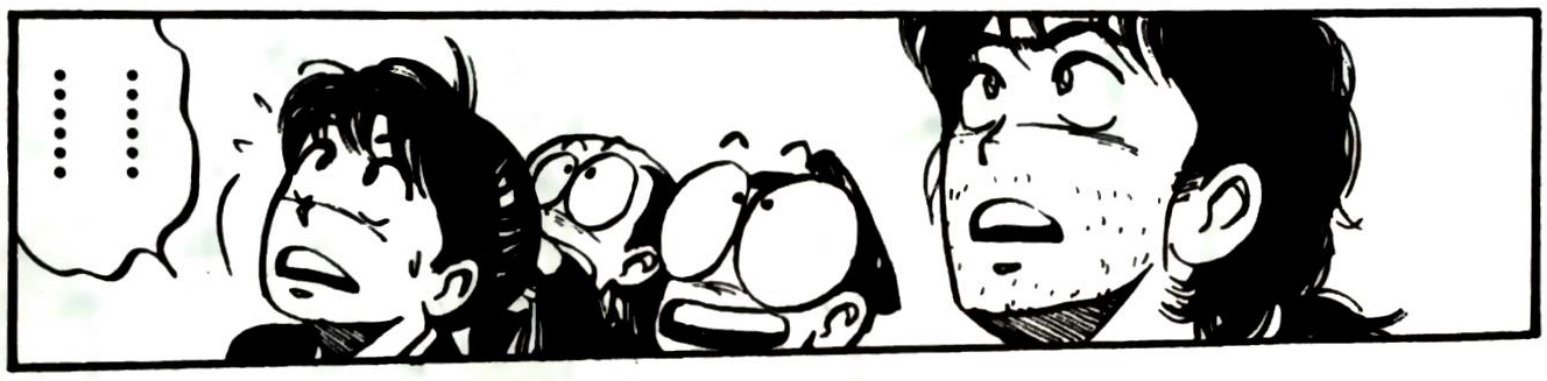
I SHOULD APOLO-GIZE TO NON.
I CAN'T GO TO KYOTO LIKE THIS.

BOOM
AEEEK!
BWAM
HUH?
WHAT IS THAT?


TOOOOOM
OKAY, OKAY, OKAY!
WE PROM-ISE! WE WON'T KILL RYOMA!

ZBOM
XOO
GABOM
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?
THE AMERI-CANS ARE ATTACK-ING!
SEE? I TOLD YOU WE SHOULDN'T HAVE OPENED THE COUNTRY!

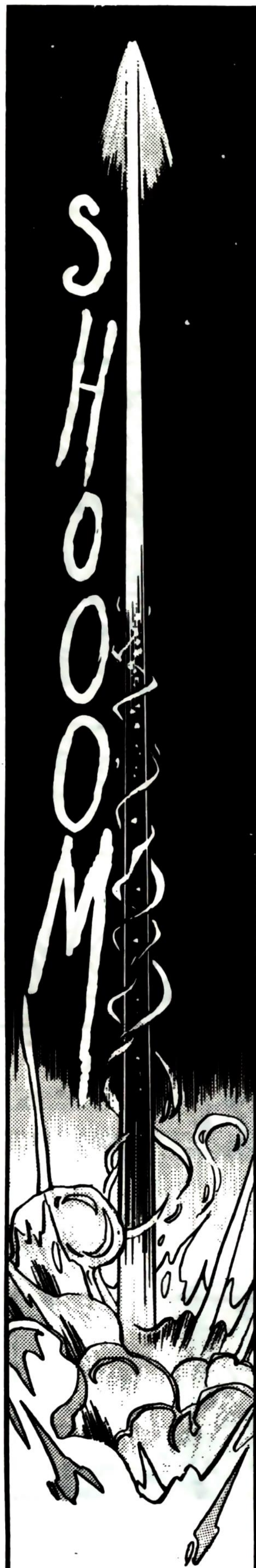
NO!
NON!!!
YOU MON-STER! GIVE ME BACK MY NON!!
WEEEMMM
MELON, WAKE UP PLEASE!
NON!
GRAB
WHIISH
OY!!
LOOK AT THE LIGHT!!


.....

KEEEEEEEEEN

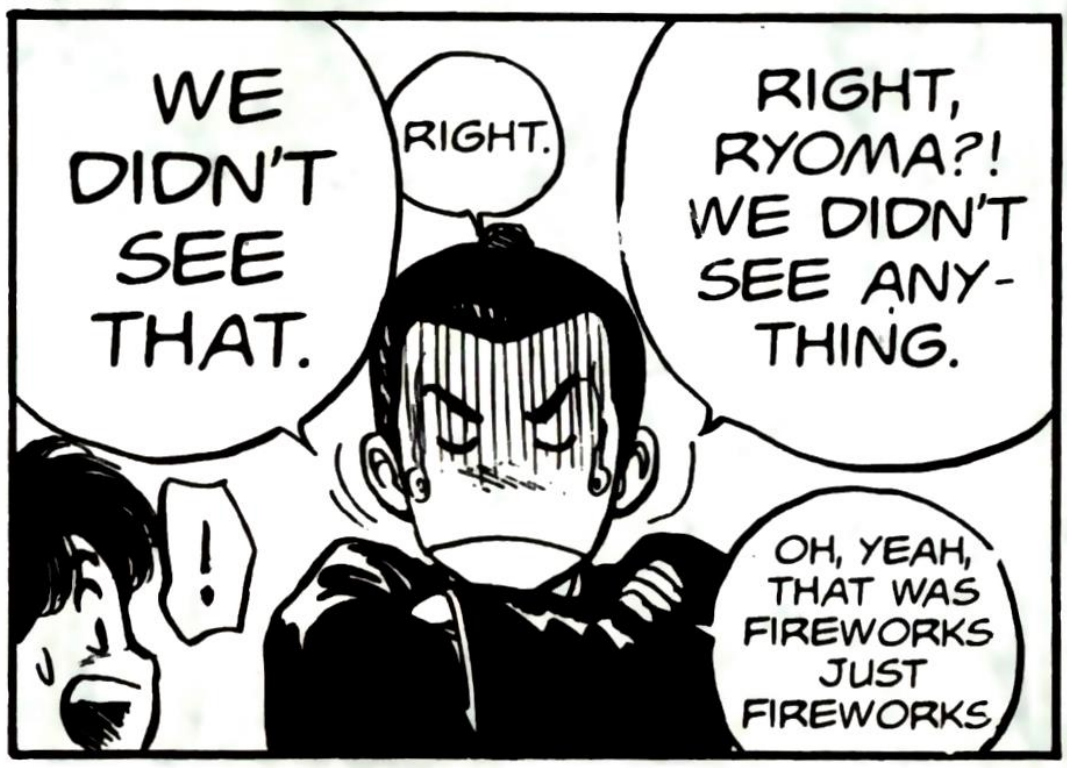
A-BAM

ZAP
OH!


SHOOOM

IT VAN-ISHED...
WHAT WAS IT...?

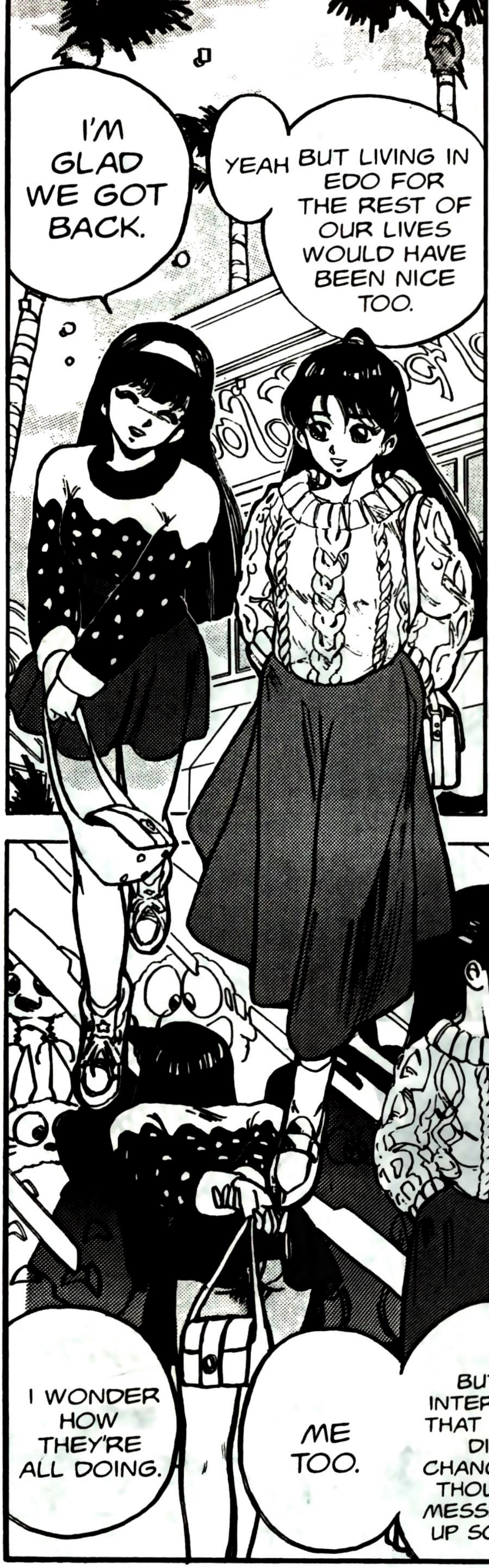
I CAN'T BE-LIEVE THIS.
I MUST NOT BELIEVE THIS.
THIS COULD NOT HAPPEN! IT'S IM-POS-SIBLE!
THERE-FORE...


WE DIDN'T SEE THAT.
RIGHT.
RIGHT, RYOMA?! WE DIDN'T SEE ANY-THING.
!
OH, YEAH, THAT WAS FIREWORKS JUST FIREWORKS

YES.
YES SIR.

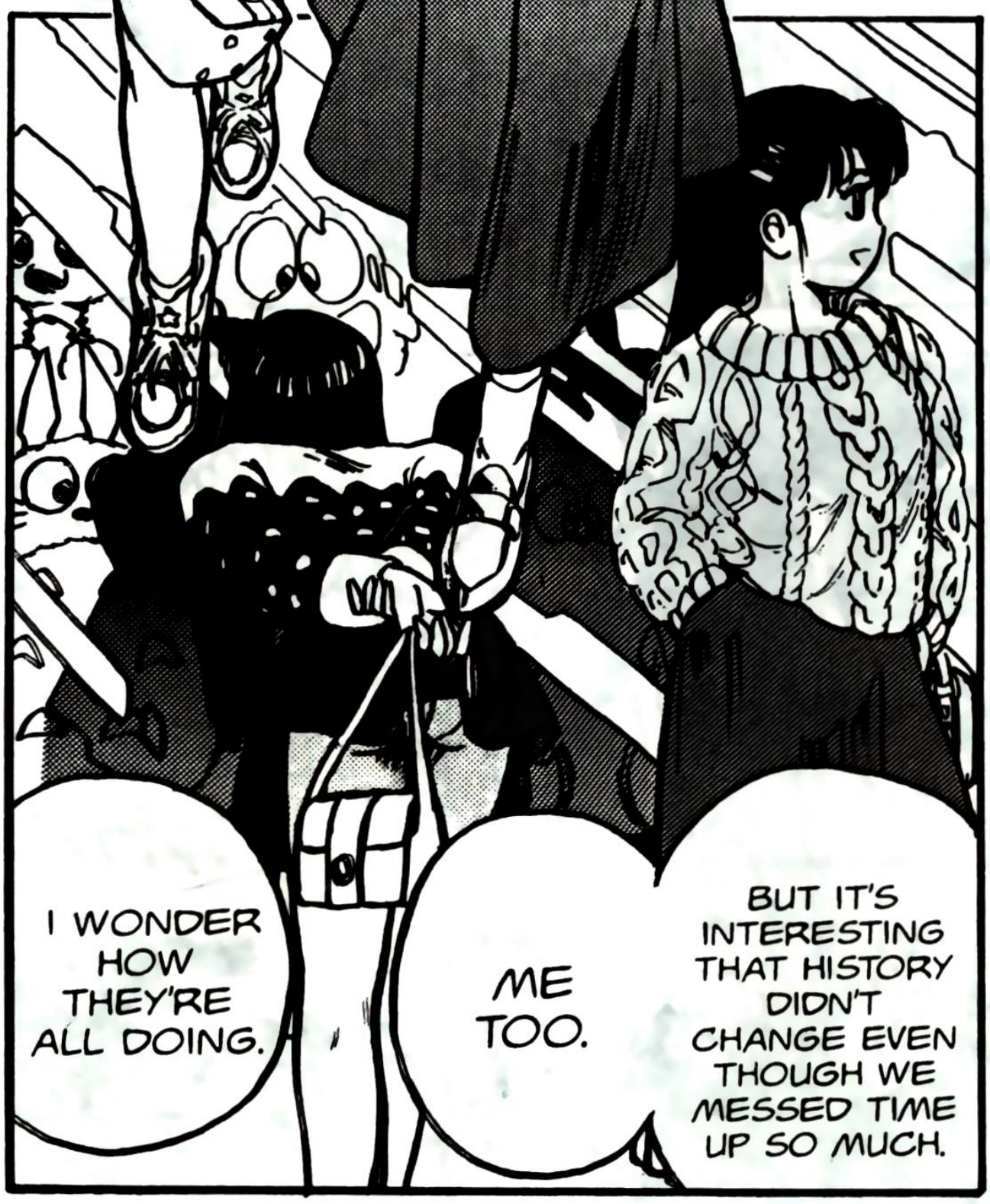
ZAP
ZZAP
FARE-WELL, NON AND MELON.
EVEN MORE AMAZING THINGS COULD HAPPEN DURING THE RESTORA-TION.

AH!
OOOH
OH!
MN
AH!
AH!
AH!
OH!
OH!
AH!
AH, SO GOOD
shiip
shiip
I'M COMING!
npiip
npiip
npiiip
OOH MELON, IT'S GOOD!
HUF
huf
HUF
HUF
HUF
THAT WAS EXTREMELY GOOD.
I FEEL EVERY-THING BETTER, NOW THAT WE'RE IN OUR OWN TIME!
MMHH...
COME


I'M GLAD WE GOT BACK.
YEAH BUT LIVING IN EDO FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE TOO.

YOU MEAN SHIN 'NO SUKE?
YEAH.

I FEEL BAD BECAUSE WE GOT SEPARATED AFTER OUR FIGHT.


I WONDER HOW THEY'RE ALL DOING.
ME TOO.
BUT IT'S INTERESTING THAT HISTORY DIDN'T CHANGE EVEN THOUGH WE MESSED TIME UP SO MUCH.

IT FELT LIKE I HAD SOMETHING HANGING ON MY LEG WHEN WE CAME BACK TO THIS TIME.
I WONDER WHAT IT WAS.
HANGING ON YOUR LEG?

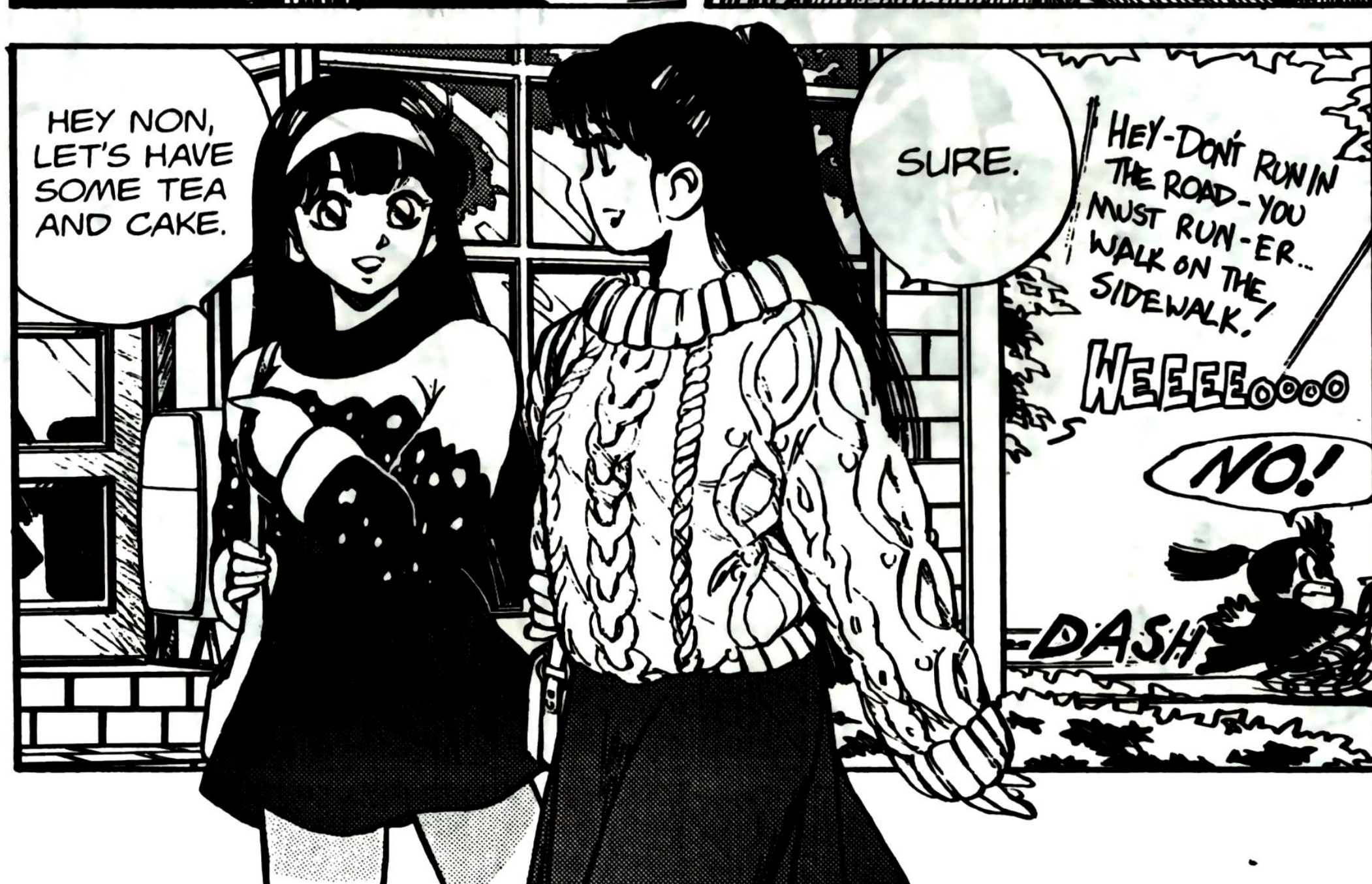
WEEEEEOOO
WEEEEEOOO
LISH

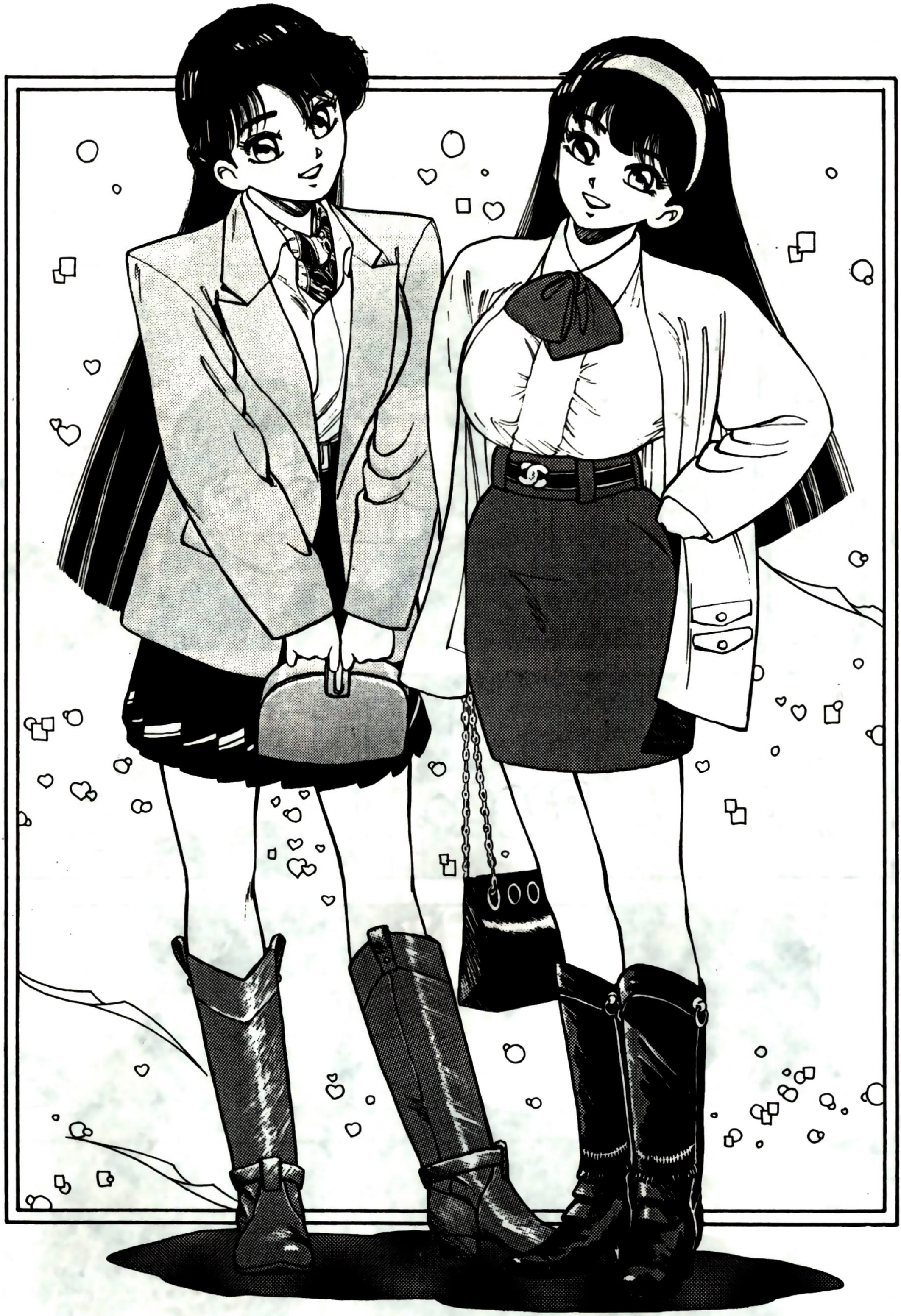
YOU, STRAN GER!
WEEEEEOOO
WEEEEEOOO
DROP YOUR SWORD!

WEEEOOOO
WEEOOO
YOU! FREEZE!
NO! HELP!
WAP
WAP
WAP
WAP
WAP

SHIT!
SHFFF...
KEEP AWAY, MON-STER!!

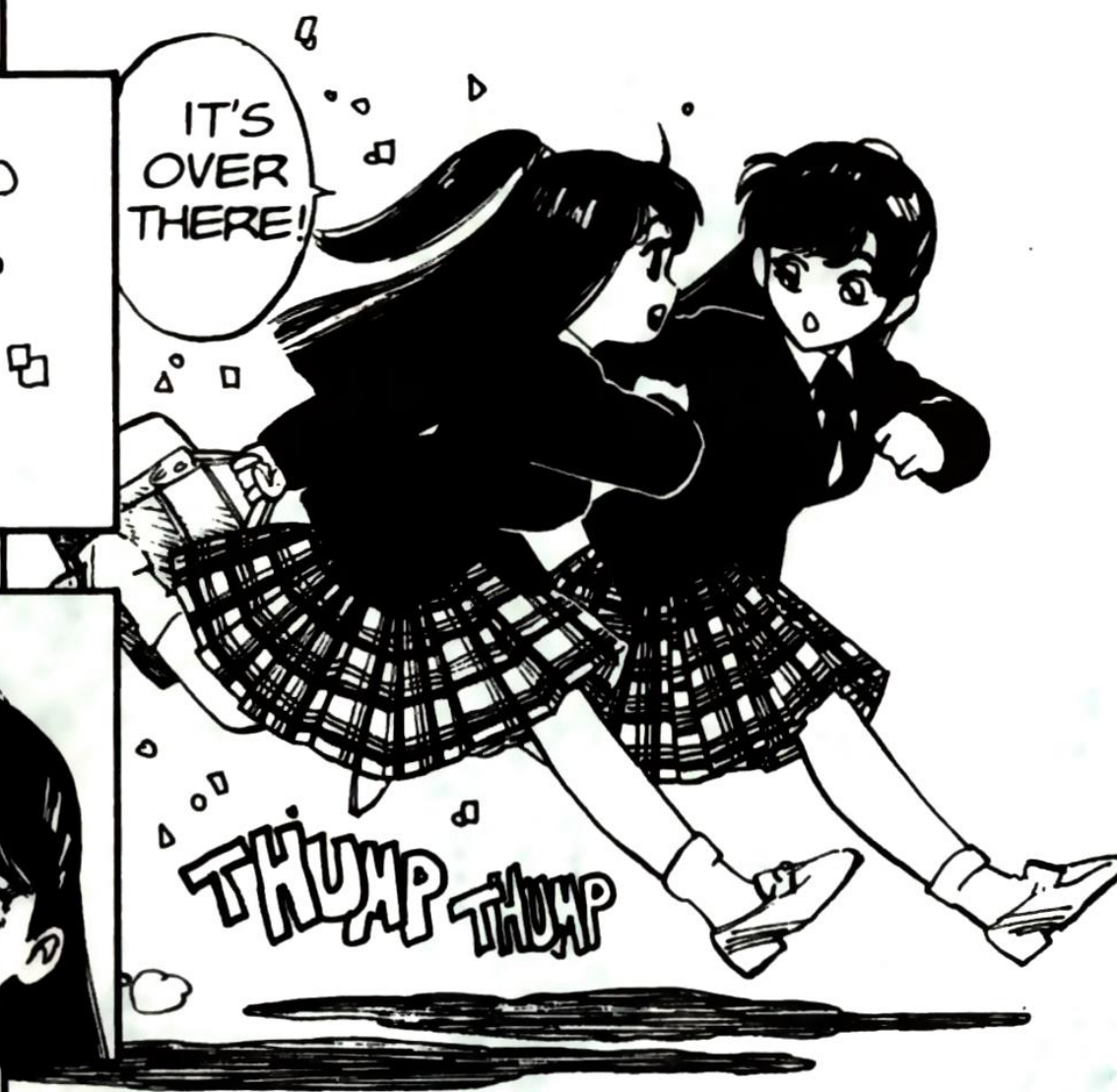
oh...
GULP


HEY NON, LET'S HAVE SOME TEA AND CAKE.
SURE.
HEY-DON'T RUN IN THE ROAD-YOU MUST RUN-ER... WALK ON THE SIDEWALK!
WEEEEOOOO
NO!
DASH



DON'T YOU MISS THEM?
YOU MEAN THE PEOPLE IN THE EDO PERIOD?
YEP. IT'S ONLY BEEN A WEEK SINCE WE CAME BACK THOUGH.
YEAH. IT FEELS LIKE I REALLY HAVEN'T SEEN THEM FOR 130 YEARS.
GIRLS SCHOOL
WE COULDN'T EVEN SAY GOODBYE TO THE OLD COUPLE. WE DISAPPEARED WHILE THEY WERE OUT.
BROOO.
WE DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO WRITE THEM A NOTE.
.....
I MISS SHIN'NOSUKE.
NON...

I HOPE HE FOUND A GOOD WIFE.


IT'S OVER THERE!
THUMP THUMP

WEEEEEEOOOO
WHAT'S THAT?

MUTTER SHUFFLE SHFF
HUH?
OH, EXCUSE ME.
MUTTER...
MUMBI SHFF
MELON, THIS WAY.

.....
HUH?
WHAT!?

UNHAND ME! I PAID MY MONEY!

I PAID 1 RYO FOR A BOWL OF NOODLES!!

GIMME MY SWORD BACK!

WHERE IS THIS 1 RYO?!! WHERE DID YOU STEAL IT FROM?!!!

IT'S SHIN'-NOSU-KE...

GASH...

BUT HOW?!

IT'S YOUR FAULT!

POLICE HEADQUARTE

GCHANK

OUT YOU GO!

HO!

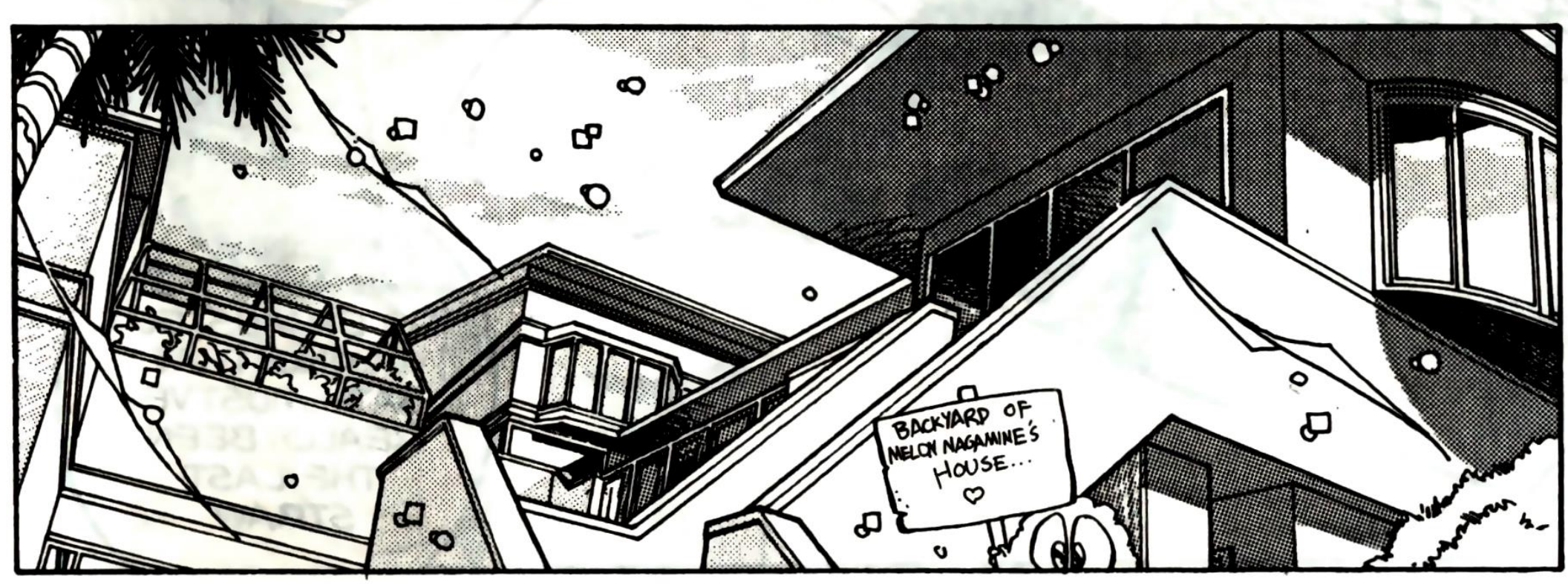
SOMEONE CAME IN TO VOUCH FOR YOU. YOU SHOULD HAVE TOLD US YOU'RE AN ACTOR.

VOUCH?!

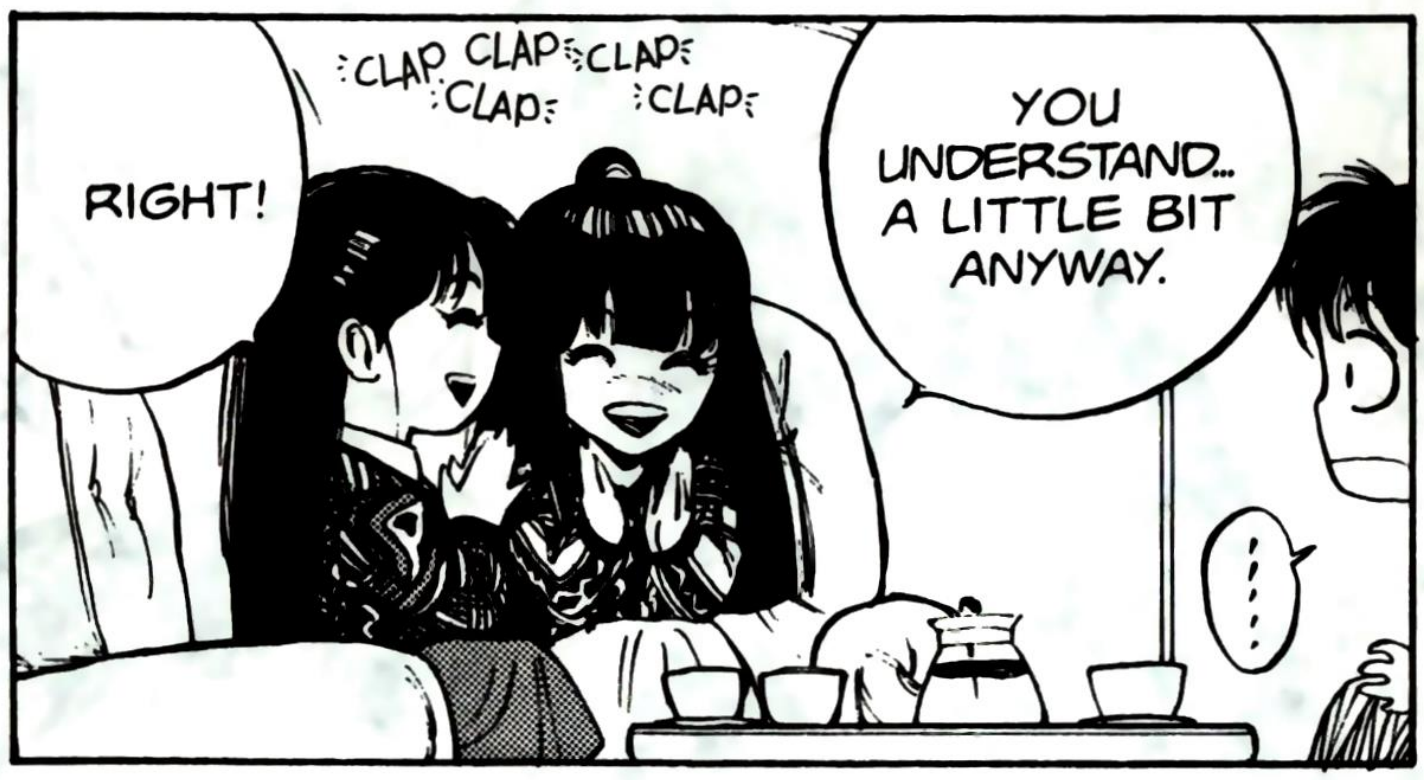
LAP CLAP CLAP CLAP WOW!

THIS IS A VERY UN-USUAL CASE ...
BUT WE MADE AN EXCEPTION BECAUSE MR. NAGAMINE'S DAUGHTER AND HER FRIEND NON KISUGI WILL BE YOUR CUSTODIANS.
KTNK
KTNK
NAGAMINE? NON KISUGI?

OH
OH, SHIN'NOSUKE, YOO-HOO!
OH! NON! AND MELON!!!
WHA
TH
HEL
ARE YO
DOIN
HE

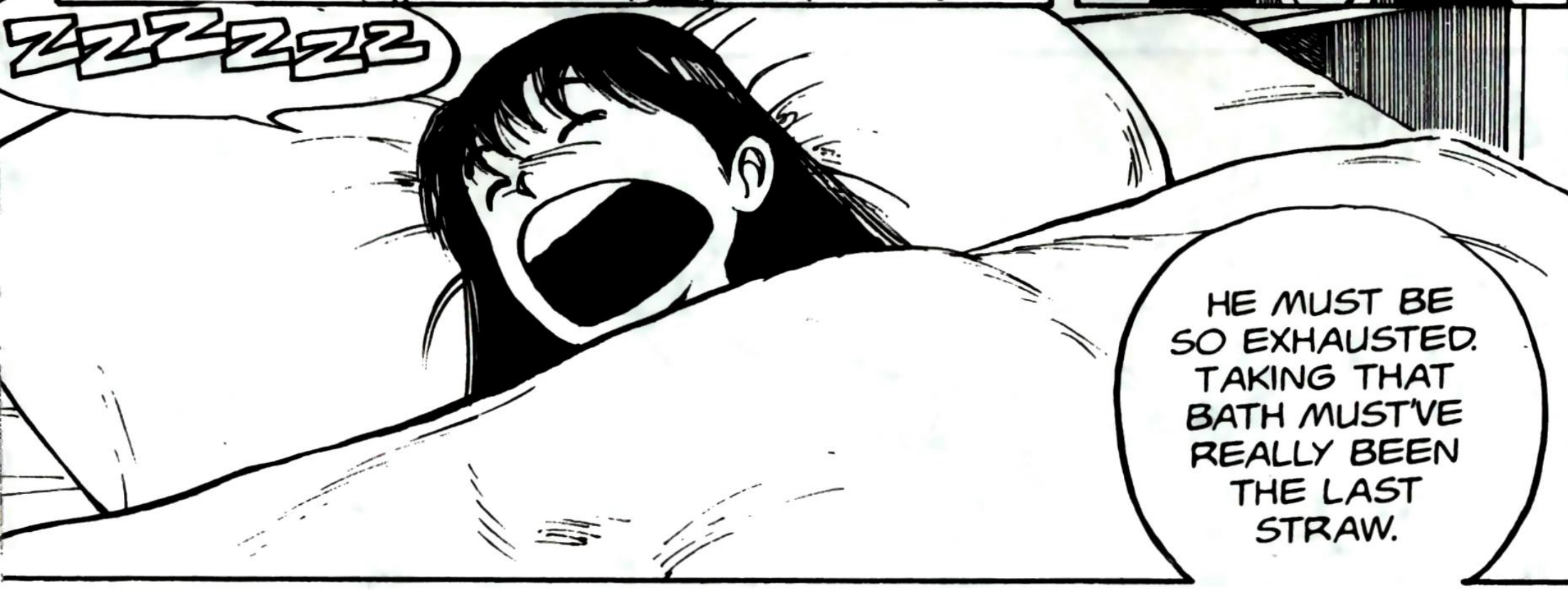

BACKYARD OF MELON NAGAMINE'S HOUSE...

Disorder
PANIC
confusion
mixed up
SO DID I COME TO THE FUTURE JAPAN?
SO I'M FROM 130 YEARS IN THE PAST BUT I'M HERE NOW. I'M NOT IN THAT ERA.
SO NON AND MELON ARE FROM THE FUTURE. THEY'RE IN THIS ERA AND THAT ERA TOO.
JAPAN HAS CHANGED SO MUCH. I STILL THINK LIKE IT'S THE PAST. THEY'RE FROM THIS TIME YET THEY ARE IN THE PAST TOO...

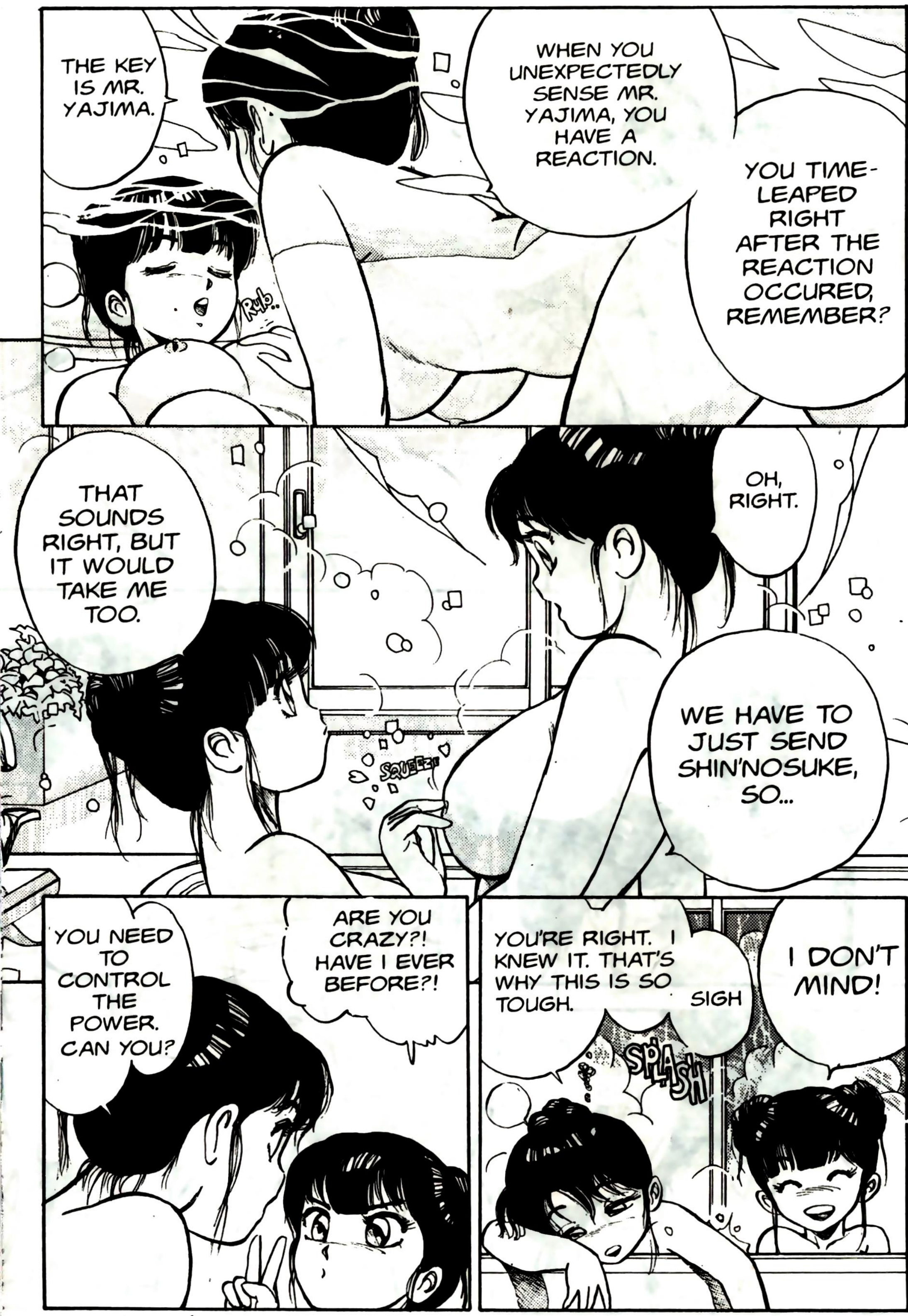

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP
RIGHT!
YOU UNDERSTAND... A LITTLE BIT ANYWAY.

BOOM!

ZOTZ
Sizzle


ZZZZZZZ
HE MUST BE SO EXHAUSTED. TAKING THAT BATH MUST'VE REALLY BEEN THE LAST STRAW.

HE WAS SLEEPING IN THE TUB.
IT WAS SO QUIET I THOUGHT HE'D DROWNED!
HE'S BEEN HERE FOR A WEEK WITHOUT ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THIS TIME, AND HE WAS STAYING OUTSIDE.
I WAS SURPRISED.
.....
POOR THING.
HOW COULD WE?
WE COULD TRY TO FIND A WAY BY EXAMINING THE "MELON PHENOMENA".
DO YOU WANT TO LIVE WITH HIM IN THIS TIME?
I WISH I COULD.
BUT I CAN'T.
HE DOESN'T BELONG IN THIS TIME. I HAVE TO GET HIM BACK SOMEHOW.


THE KEY IS MR. YAJIMA.
WHEN YOU UNEXPECTEDLY SENSE MR. YAJIMA, YOU HAVE A REACTION.
YOU TIME-LEAPED RIGHT AFTER THE REACTION OCCURED, REMEMBER?
OH, RIGHT.
THAT SOUNDS RIGHT, BUT IT WOULD TAKE ME TOO.
WE HAVE TO JUST SEND SHIN'NOSUKE, SO...
SQUEEZE
YOU NEED TO CONTROL THE POWER. CAN YOU?
ARE YOU CRAZY?! HAVE I EVER BEFORE?!
YOU'RE RIGHT. I KNEW IT. THAT'S WHY THIS IS SO TOUGH.
SIGH
SPLASH
I DON'T MIND!

SHH SPSHHHH

TV, CARS, TALL BUILDINGS, AIRPLANES...

THAT WEIRD MUSIC CALLED "ROCK".

...THE SPACE SHUTTLE

RROOAR SSHHHH

SPSHHH

THERE ARE SO MANY TOUGH GUYS LIKE...

ALIENS, ROBO COP, THE TERMINATOR, RAMBO ETC.

WILL JAPAN BE LIKE THIS...?

SHHHSPSHHHH

JAPAN OPENS...THE MEIJI RES-TORATION...

THE ERA OF THE SAMURAI WILL END AND JAPAN WILL ASSOCIATE WITH OTHER NATIONS.

NON TRIED TO TELL ME THIS.

MY WORLD VIEW WAS SO SMALL.

FOR A NEW SHIP, A NEW CREW IS NEEDED.

FOR THE NEW JAPAN....

MELON!

TAP TAP TAP TAP

HEY, MELON, MELON!

HEY!

HUH?

LOOK.

OH, MR. YAJIMA!!

SHOCK

B-BUMP B-BU

OH!

NO!

WHAT A SURPRISE!

MY HEART COULD

STOP...

HOW'S THAT?

THE REAL THING IS TOO STRONG, SO WHAT ABOUT A PHOTO?

I JUST TOOK THIS.

YEAH...

OOOH...

AH!

AH!

AH!

IT FEELS DIFFER-ENT...

MY CLIT...

I CAN FEEL IT GETTING WET...

I THINK I CAN CONTROL THE POWER...

HMM. THAT WAS EASY.

MAYBE IT'S BECAUSE OF THE REMAINING PAGE COUNT...

LET HER BE. SHE'LL COME ANYWAY.

AH AH AH

AH

C-C-C-COM-ING!

AH AH

I'M MUCH OBLIGED TO YOU. I'LL RETURN TO MY OWN TIME AND WORK FOR THE NEW ERA.

AND I'LL FIND THE NON IN MY TIME!

OKAY...

GOOD-BYE, SHINNOSUKE.

I THINK THIS IS THE BEST THING WE CAN DO.

READY, MELON?

YEP!

OH, SHIN'NOSUKE, BEFORE YOU GO...

HUH?

OKAY, I'LL DO IT.

OKAY!

DO WHAT?

NOTHING.

IT'S A SECRET.

TWITCH
TWITCH
B-BUMP
OH!
B-B
HUF
B-B
B-B
HUF
B-B
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
NIP
OH
IT'S TOO SOON!
B BUMP
OOH, MY CLIT...
NON...
WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HER?!
IT...OH, NEVER MIND. YOUR CHANCE IS WHEN SHE COMES!
GRAB HER HAND WHEN SHE COMES, OKAY?
FWUD

O-OKAY.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN SHE COMES?

COME ON, MELON.

Ah...

AH!

Ah...

YES!

Ah..

Ah..

Ah..

AH..

Ahm..

AHN...

HUF...

HUF

HUF

HUF

HUF!

Ah...

HUF..

oh...

OH...

OMIGOD...

OH! GOOOOD!

I-I'M C-COMING! SHIN'NOSUKE, TAKE MY HAND!

NOW!

OK!

THEY'RE SO SERIOUS

GRAB

GO TO...
EDO!!
PAWAP
FLASH
OH
HE'S VAN-ISHED...
ARE YOU OKAY, MELON?
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF
YEAH... THAT WAS GOOD.
HUF
HUF
HUF
HUF

NON, HURRY UP!

pant

HOLD ON, MELON!

TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP

pant pant pant pant pant

TAP TAP TAP TAP

WHAT IS THIS?!

THIS IS THE TSURUOKA HACHIMAN-BODHSATTVA SHRINE.

IT HASN'T CHANGED SINCE IT WAS BUILT IN THE 15TH CENTURY.

I KNOW *THAT*.

THIRD POLE, LEFT SIDE, ON THE BACK!

HOP STEP

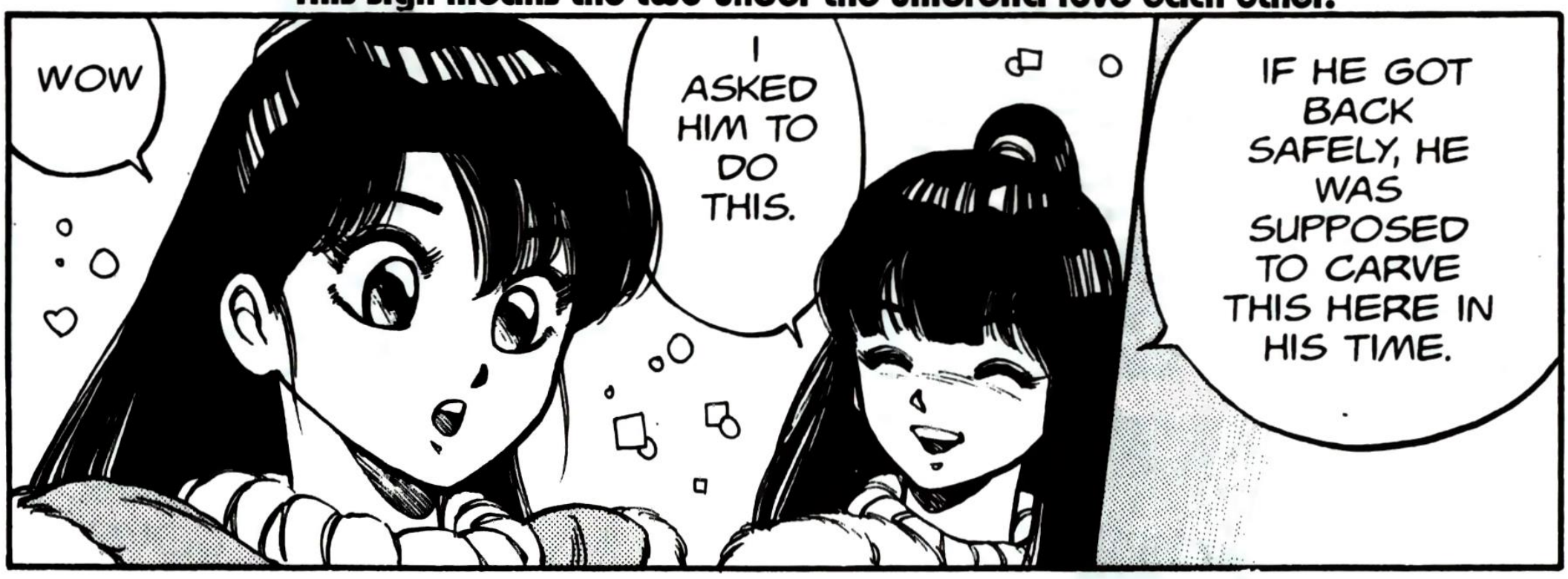
NO...

NO...

BINGO!!

HERE IT IS! NON, I FOUND IT! A LOVE LETTER FROM 128 YEARS AGO!!

*This sign means the two under the umbrella love each other.



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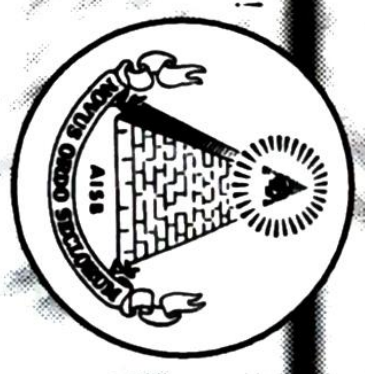

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